

VZCZCXRO7058
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #1532/01 1391409
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 181409Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7417
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001532

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2018
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [KJUS](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: COR MEMBER ALLEGES HORRIFIC CONDITIONS AT WOMEN'S
PRISON

REF: BAGHDAD 0129

11. (C) SUMMARY: Nada Ibrahim, a parliamentarian in the Hewar party, recounted her May 12 visit to Khadimiya women's prison to PolOff on May 13. She was shocked at the conditions of the prison and the lives of the female detainees. She said the prison had been infiltrated by militias and was operating as a brothel at nights. She confirmed previous reporting that said many women were raped at police stations prior to coming to the prison, and that the health center was woefully inadequate and under-funded (reftel). While she claimed there were no solutions to the high levels of corruption, she finally admitted that the only solutions lay in a new building and providing security for the staff, especially for the investigative judge. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Nada Ibrahim a Council of Representatives (CoR) member in the National Front for Dialogue/Hewar party, told PolOff on May 13 about her visit to Khadimiya Women's Prison, a Ministry of Justice facility, the previous day. She had gone to investigate the prison with ePRT 3, Danish Embassy officials, and a CNN crew invited by the parliamentarian. (NOTE: Prison officials would not permit the CNN crew to film. END NOTE.) Although they were denied full access to the facility, they had conversations with an investigative judge, legal officials, the doctor, and a couple detainees. (NOTE: The female investigative judge acts as the de facto warden of the prison. The actual warden, Zadon Jafar Siki, is believed to be Jaysh al-Mehdi (JAM)-affiliated. The former warden, a female, quit last year after repeated threats. END NOTE)

13. (C) Nada was visibly upset while retelling what she saw and heard at the prison. Many of the women detainees are being held for prostitution, and many sources told Nada that the prison turns into a brothel at night, with militia members coming in and using the women as they please. They also said that the guards, both male and female, were involved with this scheme and not only allow the men in, but partake in the actions as well. The investigative judge admitted that she found a guard with one of the detainees in her office one morning, and the guard expressed disdain for her before slowly leaving. Some of the detainees told Nada they were scared during the night and had difficulty sleeping due to the activity, which often takes place within the 35-person cells. Nada added that there are 13 children held with their mothers.

14. (C) Other than the alleged prostitution ring, there were no reports of rape within the prison, according to Nada, but she claimed that almost all the women were raped at the police stations, which corroborates earlier reporting. Minister of Human Rights Wijdan Salim inspected the prison in January on a direct request from the PM to investigate rape and torture allegations. As reported reftel, Wijdan said she saw no such evidence in the prison, but that some inmates alleged that police raped and tortured them at the police stations. The investigative judge told Nada that every woman in her twenties had been raped by police and gave one account of a woman who became pregnant in a police station, was given

an unhygienic abortion, and now has permanent damage. Nada heard from several sources that upon arrival, the women are forced by the guards to sign statements swearing that they have not been raped.

15. (C) Due to the overwhelming influence of militias, the prison was ripe with corruption, according to the staff and detainees. The investigative judge told Nada in confidence that she was threatened by JAM members any time she wrote reports about the terrible state of the prison and corruption amongst the guards. The investigative judge said the food contractor stole half the money and only provided each woman with one dollar per day's worth of food. Nada described the state of the building as old, crumbling, and dirty. She pointed out that its placement on a side street in a dangerous neighborhood made it a prime target for militias.

16. (C) Nada added that the health center was terrible, under-staffed, and under-funded. The sole doctor told her there was no money to properly run the facility, and there was no women's doctor. He said he receives no special training to take care of female prisoners. The investigative judge said that they also lacked social workers; they had three and needed fifteen at least.

17. (C) COMMENT: Recent reports of the state of this prison are worse than previous reports. It seems that any recommendations made by Minister Wijdan after her January visit went unheard. Post was unable to visit the prison the following day due to security conditions, as has been the case with many attempted visits the last few months, but we will continue efforts to investigate the facility and verify

BAGHDAD 00001532 002 OF 002

these claims. Due to the dilapidated conditions of the building and the apparent infiltration of the militias in the prison, the only way to solve these problems may be to relocate the prison to a more secure area where militias cannot control and threaten the staff. Post will conduct a follow-up meeting with Nada to discuss possible solutions, such as a location for a new building where the prisoners can be better monitored and new staff can be put in place.
CROCKER